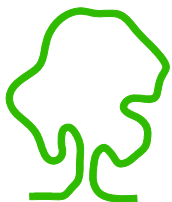


STEVE LAMB

**PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OFFICE AT NEW BARN FARM,
CAPEL ROAD, HORSHAM**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

April 2026



eas ltd

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd

REPORT DATA SHEET

Requirement	Data
Report Reference	891/LDV/S.Lamb/NewBarnFarm/Office/PEA
Date	April 2026
Client	Steve Lamb
Report type	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Purpose	Submission to Planning
Revisions	N/A
Prepared by	Aimee – Jane Lowles BSc (Hons), MRes  Signed
Approved by	Lucy Monday BSc (Hons), ACIEEM  Signed

STEVE LAMB

PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OFFICE AT NEW BARN FARM, CAPEL ROAD, HORSHAM

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

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STEVE LAMB

**PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OFFICE AT NEW BARN FARM,
CAPEL ROAD, HORSHAM**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

April 2026

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd has been appointed to prepare a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in relation to the proposed redevelopment of land at New Barn Farm, Capel Road, near Horsham.

The site (as existing) comprises an office with adjacent storage unit located within a yard area at New Barn Farm. Surrounding land use comprises an equestrian centre with stabling and sand schools, storage areas / yards and access, and residential dwellings with private garden space. It is proposed to remove the existing office and storage unit, and develop a new office building with associated access and parking.

The aim of this report is to collate preliminary, baseline information on the conservation and ecological status of the site in terms of habitats and species within the framework of current environmental legislation and provide recommendations in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the site, where appropriate.

The assessment comprised consultation with the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre to obtain records of protected, rare and notable habitats and species within 1 km of the site, review of the Surrey Interactive Map, consultation with Horsham District Council regarding Tree Preservation Orders for trees within and adjacent to the site, and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (walkover survey) undertaken on 5 March 2026 to identify habitats and features of ecological value and the site's likely potential to support protected, rare and other notable species.

Consultation with Horsham District Council has confirmed that there are no trees within or adjacent to the site which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. Assessment of the site, along with a review of consultation data, confirmed that the site does not lie within or immediately adjacent to any statutory or non-statutory designated sites. However, there is Priority habitat and a Local Wildlife Site located within close proximity.

The site comprises hard standing adjacent to a vegetated bund to the north of the existing office which divides the site from Capel Road. The bund is considered to be of low ecological value. No further surveying or mitigation is indicated in this case.

It is considered that the proposed development will bring opportunities to deliver ecological net gain. Recommendations have been given for the enhancement of the site to include the provision of roosting and nesting features for bats and birds.

STEVE LAMB

**PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OFFICE AT NEW BARN FARM,
CAPEL ROAD, HORSHAM**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

April 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The following report, prepared by Environmental Assessment Services Limited, is a preliminary assessment of the baseline status of the ecology of land at New Barn Farm, Capel Road, Horsham.

The site comprises an existing office and storage unit located on hard standing within a yard area of New Barn Farm. Adjacent land use within the wider farm yard includes an equestrian centre with stabling and sand schools, storage / yard areas and access, and residential dwellings with private garden space. The Ordnance Survey map reference for the centre of the site is TQ 19283 37626. See Appendix A for the site location and existing site plans.

It is proposed to remove the existing office and storage unit, and redevelop the plot to include a single office building with access and parking. See Appendix B for the proposed site plans.

1.2 Aim of the Report

The aim of the report is to collate preliminary, baseline information on the conservation and ecological status of the site in terms of habitats and species, within the framework of current environmental legislation.

The report also evaluates the potential of the site to support protected species, in particular for:

- Animals and plants listed under Schedules 1 and 5, and Schedule 8, respectively, of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) as amended, and those European protected species listed under Schedules 2 and 5 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- Plants and animals with Red Data Book¹ or Notable² status.

¹ The World Conservation Union Red List of threatened species provides taxonomic, conservation status and distribution information on taxa (species or group of related species) evaluated to determine their relative risk of extinction.

² Notable (or Nationally Scarce) species occur in 16 – 100 10 km squares in Britain.

³ Species derived from Section 41 list of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 + the hen harrier.

- Plants, animals and habitats identified as Priority Species / Habitats or Species / Habitats of Principal Importance for Conservation in England (formerly UK Biodiversity Action Plan)³.

Where the site includes habitats and/or features of ecological value and/or has potential for use by protected species, an assessment of the likely impacts of the proposal is made, together with recommendations for any further surveying, mitigation and/or enhancement as considered appropriate.

1.3 Legislation

The legislation relevant to this study is:

- i. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which transposes into UK law the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (known as the “Bern Convention”) and the Birds Directive 2009.
- ii. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000, which strengthens the legal protection for threatened species.
- iii. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, which through Section 41 provides a list of habitats and species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation (Priority Habitats and Species) in England.
- iv. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. These consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, which transposed the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (EC Habitats Directive) into national law.
- v. Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which safeguards both the animals and their setts.
- vi. The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (made under section 97 of The Environment Act 1995), which make provisions for the protection of important hedgerows.
- vii. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which makes requirements for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system.

1.4 Assessment Method

This assessment has been prepared generally in accordance with the CIEEM EcIA guidelines, as applicable, as recognised by the British Standard on Biodiversity BS42020:2013.

The assessment was undertaken in two stages:

- a) Consultation: comprising data searches by Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) and Horsham District Council.
- b) Preliminary ecological appraisal (walkover survey) carried out on 5 March 2026 to:

- Assess the baseline status of the site.
- Identify its potential for use by species of flora and fauna protected or controlled under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and associated European legislation.
- Identify notable habitats and features of interest that should or could be retained and/or enhanced as part of the proposed development.

2. CONSULTATION AND BASELINE DATA SEARCH

2.1 Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre Data Search

- 2.1.1 Data obtained from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) provided information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites and records of protected and notable species within the search area. The search was conducted for a 1 km radius surrounding the Ordnance Survey grid reference TQ 19259 37552. The search area was selected based on the scale and likely impacts of the proposed development.
- 2.1.2 The statutory and non-statutory designated sites identified by SxBRC within 1 km of the site are set out in section 3.2 below, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on these sites. Mitigation, where appropriate, is recommended in section 4.
- 2.1.3 Records of protected and rare species within 1 km of the site have been provided by SxBRC. These records are discussed under the protected species headings in Section 3.3 below, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on these species. Further surveying and/or mitigation, where appropriate, is recommended in section 4.

2.2 Horsham District Council

- 2.2.1 Horsham District Council's Tree Preservation Order (TPO) mapping (available online) has been used to identify trees protected by TPOs within and adjacent to the site. There are no trees protected by TPOs within or adjacent to the site. The closest trees protected by a TPO lie a significant distance to the east of the site, beyond Highams Gill and Horsegills Wood.

2.3 Local Geology and Soil Type

- 2.3.1 Soil type will impact factors including site drainage, nutrient availability and pH, this together with other factors such as site topography, as well as anthropogenic activity will impact site flora and fauna.
- 2.3.2 According to the British Geological Survey (available online), the site lies on Weald Clay Formation-Mudstone. The sedimentary rocks are fluvial, palustrine and shallow marine in origin.
- 2.3.3 According to Magic Maps the soilscape is of slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage.

3. SITE ASSESSMENT

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (walkover survey) was carried out on 5 March 2026. The following is based on the findings of that assessment, together with a review of information provided by the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) and Horsham District Council. Photographs taken during the site survey are provided in Appendix C.

3.1 Habitat Assessment

- 3.1.1 The site is located to the south of Capel Road within a rural area to the northwest of Ruspur, West Sussex. The area is characterised by gill, deciduous and ancient woodland, with irregular shaped fields (used for a mixture of crop and pasture) divided by tree lines and wooded shaws. Habitat within the area appears to be well connected with no significant barriers (e.g. major highways).
- 3.1.2 The site comprises an existing office and storage unit and hard standing. Adjacent land comprises an equestrian centre with stabling and sand schools, storage areas / yard space and access, and residential dwellings with private garden space. The proposed office will utilise the existing site entrance from Capel Road.
- 3.1.3 There is a vegetated bund adjacent to the northern boundary of the plot which divides the site from Capel Road. The bund is dominated by common nettle and other forbs common to disturbed ground. There are no trees or shrubs on the south side of the bund, however, there is a single early mature ash on the north side adjacent to Capel Road.

3.2 Designated Sites and Priority Habitats

- 3.2.1 There are no statutory sites within 1 km of the site identified by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC).
- 3.2.2 There is one Local Wildlife Site (LWS), a non-statutory designated site, recognised for its considerable ecological value. LWS are acknowledged by local planning authorities across Sussex, and their importance is reflected in relevant Local Plans. Horsegills Wood, comprises an area of approximately 40.3 hectares of semi-natural woodland and stream located beyond the paddocks >300 m to the south of the site. Horsegills Wood is known for its botanical importance and consists of a number of small wooded ravines containing streams. Most of the ancient woodland consists of pedunculate oak standards over old hornbeam coppice. There is a large population of very rare plant, coralroot (*Cardamine bulbifera*). Similar habitat also lies adjacent to the site, to the north of Capel Road, at Rome Wood which includes the Cowix Gills (deciduous, gill and ancient woodland). Both areas of woodland are considered likely to support notable and protected species.
- 3.2.3 The 'Surrey Interactive Map' has been used to identify sites of ecological importance within 1 km of the site. The woodland to the north of the site is identified to part of a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA). Clock House Brickworks located to the northwest of the site is a geological SSSI.

- 3.2.4 There are no other non-statutory designated sites identified by SxBRC within 1 km of the site and no direct land take from any designated (or non-designated) sites as a result of the proposed development.
- 3.2.5 The site has been assessed for its potential to include or be part of (BAP) Priority Habitat as listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act).
- 3.2.6 Section 41 Habitats recorded within 1 km of the site include:
- Deciduous woodland
 - Ancient woodland
 - Ghyll woodland
 - Open Water
- 3.2.7 The Section 41 Habitats identified within 1 km of the site (deciduous woodland, ancient woodland and ghyll woodland) comprise the habitats present within Horsegills Wood (with Highams Gill), located to the south of the site, and Rome Wood (with Cowix Gills) to the north of the site.
- 3.2.8 There are no Priority Habitats within or immediately adjacent to the site.
- 3.2.9 The proposed replacement office is considered unlikely to have a significant impact on any notable or designated habitats.

3.3 Protected and Controlled Species

3.3.1 *Trees and Hedgerows*

There is an early mature ash on the northern side of the bund adjacent to Capel Road. This tree is not considered to be of significant ecological value and is unlikely to be significantly impacted by the proposed redevelopment of the hard standing area to the south.

3.3.2 *Plants*

There is planting within or adjacent to the site that is considered to be of ecological value.

No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case.

3.3.3 *Invertebrates*

The site has low/negligible potential to support invertebrate species.

No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case.

3.3.4 *Amphibians*

The site has negligible potential to support amphibian species.

No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case.

3.3.5 *Reptiles*

The site has negligible potential to support reptile species.

No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case.

3.3.6 *Birds*

The site has negligible potential to support species of birds.

No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case.

3.3.7 *Bats*

The site has negligible potential to support bat species.

No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case.

3.3.8 *Amphibians*

The site has negligible potential to support amphibian species.

No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case.

3.3.9 *Common/Hazel Dormice*

The site has negligible potential to support hazel dormice.

No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case.

3.3.10 *Other Protected and Notable Species*

There are no other records of notable species considered likely to be impacted by the proposed development within 1 km of the site.

The site is generally considered to be of low ecological value and deemed unlikely to support any notable and/or protected species of flora or fauna.

3.3.11 *Non-native Invasive Species*

No non-native invasive species were identified within or adjacent to the site during the site walkover assessment.

4. **MITIGATION**

The following section of this report provides recommendations for further surveying and/or mitigation in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, protect, compensate). Recommendations for enhancement (i.e. measures

recommended beyond that required to compensate for loss) are given in section 5 below.

4.1 Priority and Notable Habitats

The proposed development will not result in any direct impact on notable or priority habitats. However, it is acknowledged that there are areas of deciduous, gill and ancient woodland within close proximity to the site, and the woodland to the south of the site is a Local Wildlife Site.

The proposed development comprising the replacement of an existing office is deemed unlikely to have any significant impact on these habitats. However, many of the species associated with the woodland are considered likely to be light sensitive. It is therefore recommended that a sensitive lighting scheme is agreed with the council.

Lighting should be:

- Limited to activity response lighting where possible, i.e. lighting which is triggered by movement, in order to avoid prolonged light use which may prevent bats and other species from moving through lite areas.
- The lighting brightness should be set as low as possible. Low-pressure sodium lamps should be used (high-pressure sodium or mercury lamps should not be used).
- Lighting fixtures should be mounted at low level and light spread should be limited. Light should not spread upward or be permitted to fall on linear planting features, any installed bat boxes or access routes to / from the boxes and the wider suitable habitat.

4.2 Trees and Hedgerows

The redevelopment of the site is considered unlikely to significantly impact trees to the north of the bund.

New planting along the northern boundary of the site is recommended in order to delivery biodiversity net gain. See recommended planting in section 5.1 below.

4.3 Amphibians

No further surveying or mitigation indicated.

4.4 Reptiles

No further surveying or mitigation indicated.

4.5 Birds

No further surveying or mitigation indicated.

4.6 Bats

No further surveying or mitigation indicated.



4.8 Non-native Invasive Species

Biological protection measures must be implemented when transferring soil and plant material in this case. This includes transferring vehicles and machinery on and off site, the disposal of soils and importation of soils which could contain plant matter, and the importing of new planting as part of the landscaping scheme.

4.9 Other Protected and Notable Species

If any new evidence of protected species is discovered whilst site clearance and construction work is in progress, Natural England should be informed immediately and appropriate advice on how to deal with the situation should be sought from a qualified ecologist.

5. ENHANCEMENT

Some ecological enhancement should be included within the development site to secure biodiversity improvement beyond that of the existing site.

5.1 Planting

It is recommended that soft landscaping and planters are used within the plot to provide some planting for the ecological enhancement of the site.

Planting along the northern boundary of the site should include native tree and shrub species, ideally similar to those along the northern boundary of the wider site. These include field maple, holly, hawthorn, blackthorn, hornbeam and oak.

Non-native and invasive species, such as cherry laurel, should not be planted as these may spread to the adjacent woodland areas, degrading their value.

5.2 Birds

Nesting boxes should be incorporated into the proposed building in order to deliver enhanced nesting opportunities for birds.

Sparrow terrace boxes and swift nest boxes may be fixed beneath the eaves on east facing facades of the new building for the benefit of these species likely to be present within the area and deemed likely to use the site where provisions are made.

5.3 Bats

Common and soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats have been recorded in the area. Each of these species are known to use buildings to roost where suitable features and access is available.

Roosting features for bats should be included within the proposed development plans for the enhancement of the site for bats, together with new planting as recommended above.

Roosting features for bats should include purpose made bat boxes installed at high level (away from opening windows and doors) on the southern façade of the proposed building, together with roof access tile sets to permit access into any enclosed non-habitable roof spaces within the new building.

Roof lining materials that pose a risk of entanglement (which includes most modern roofing membranes and breathable roofing membranes) are NOT to be used (unless proven safe for bats, and approved by Natural England, for example TXL BatSafe). Type 1F Bitumen roofing felts are to be used within all new roofing areas which require such a liner. If an alternative bat safe liner is used a snagging propensity test pass certificate is to be secured to the membrane, where installed, for future reference / checks.

6. CONCLUSIONS

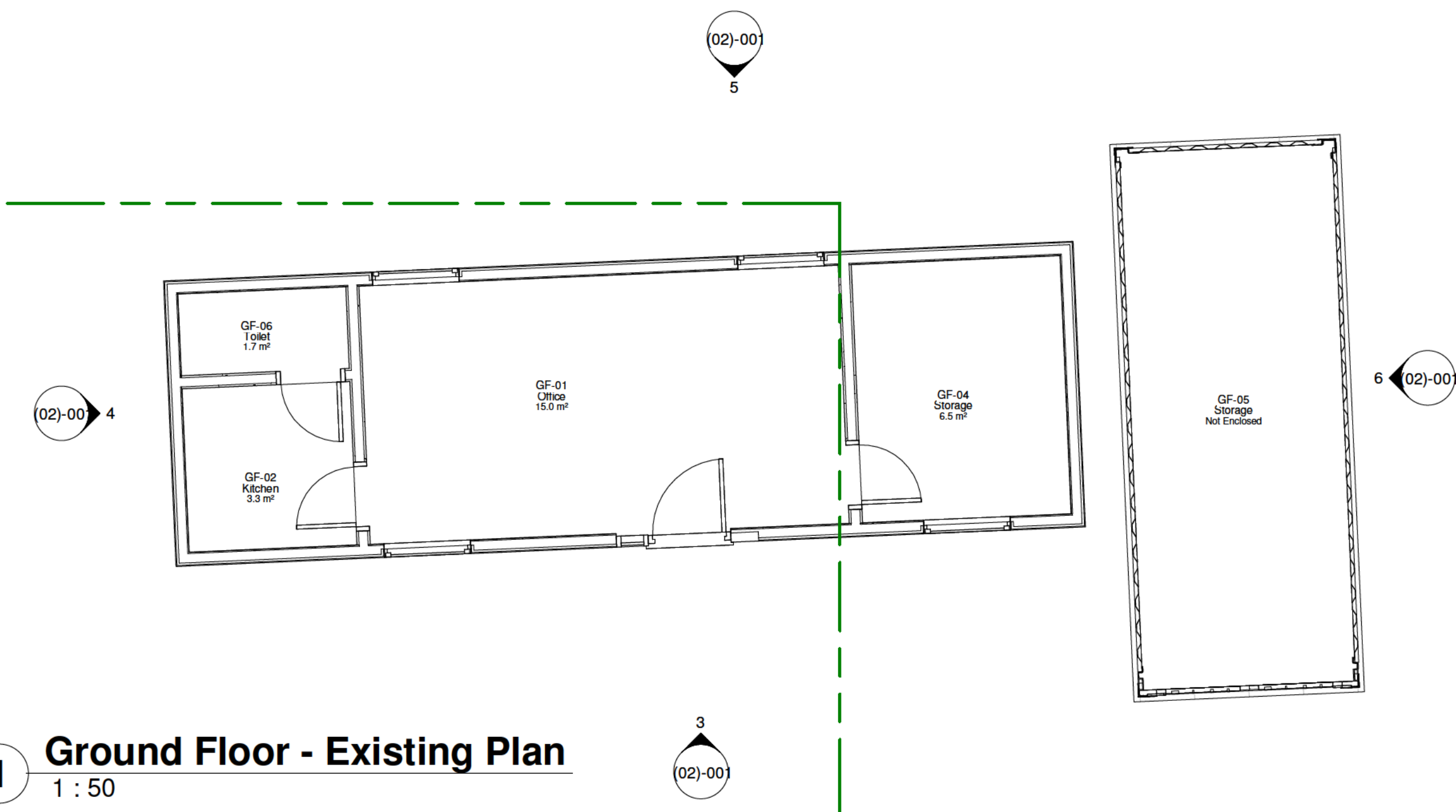
- 6.1 The site (as existing) comprises an office and storage unit located on hard standing. There is a vegetated bund to the north of the office which divides the site from Capel Road. There are mature trees adjacent to the road to the north of the site.
- 6.2 The site will utilise the existing site entrance. The proposed development, comprising a replacement office with associated access and parking is not considered likely to impact any notable or protected habitats or species of flora or fauna. No further surveying or mitigation is recommended in this case. However, there are habitats within the wider area which are likely to support species vulnerable to artificial lighting. It is therefore recommended that a sensitive lighting scheme be agreed with the Council as part of the sites redevelopment.
- 6.3 Some ecological enhancement of the site should be delivered in accordance with the NPPF. Recommendations for native planting and the inclusion of bird nesting boxes and bat roosting features have been provided for inclusion within the building design.

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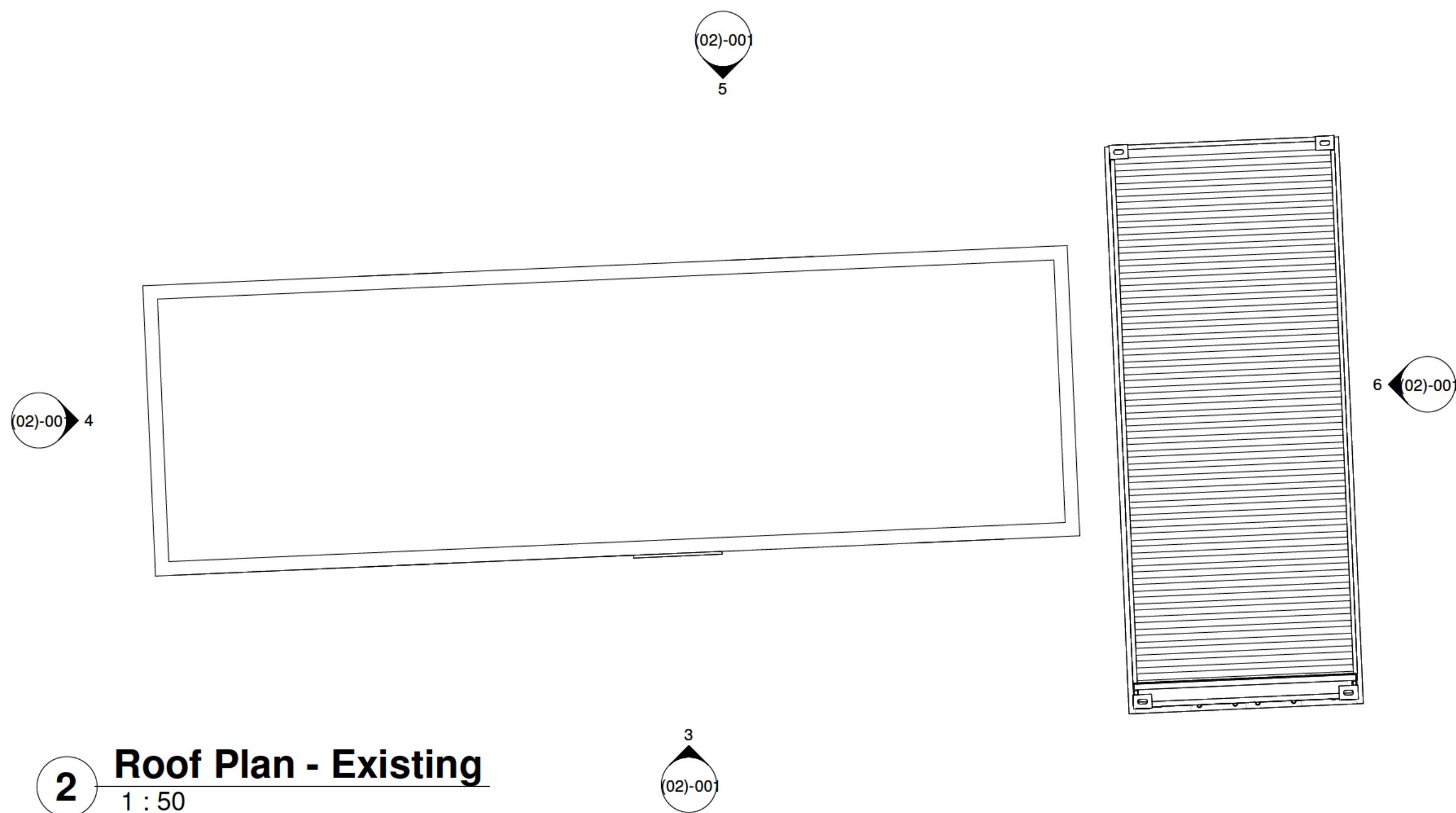
APPENDIX A

Site Location and Existing Site Plans

1 Ground Floor - Existing Plan
1 : 50



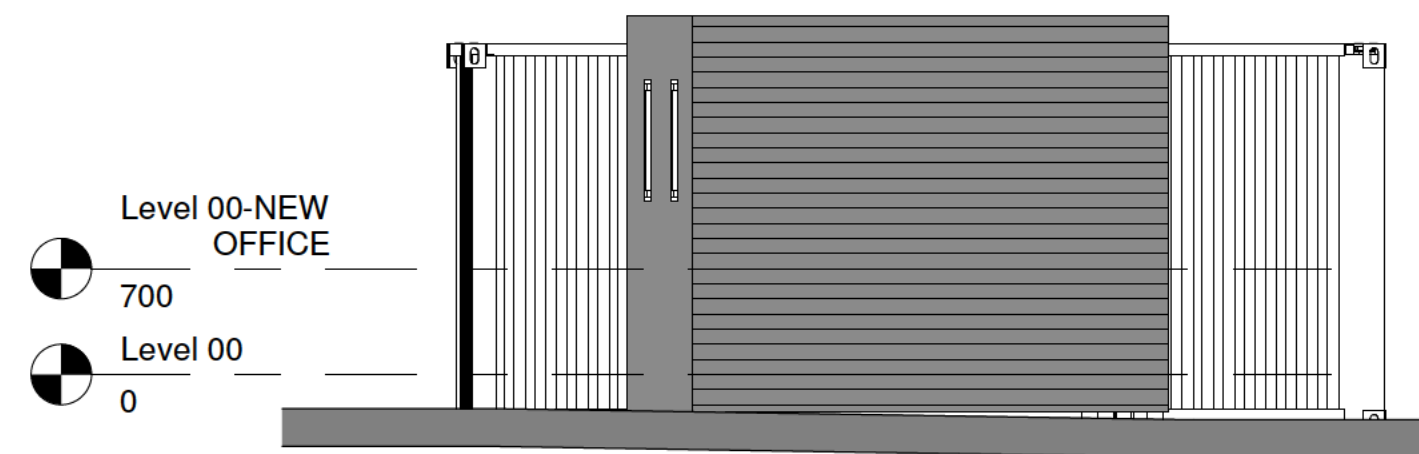
2 Roof Plan - Existing
1 : 50



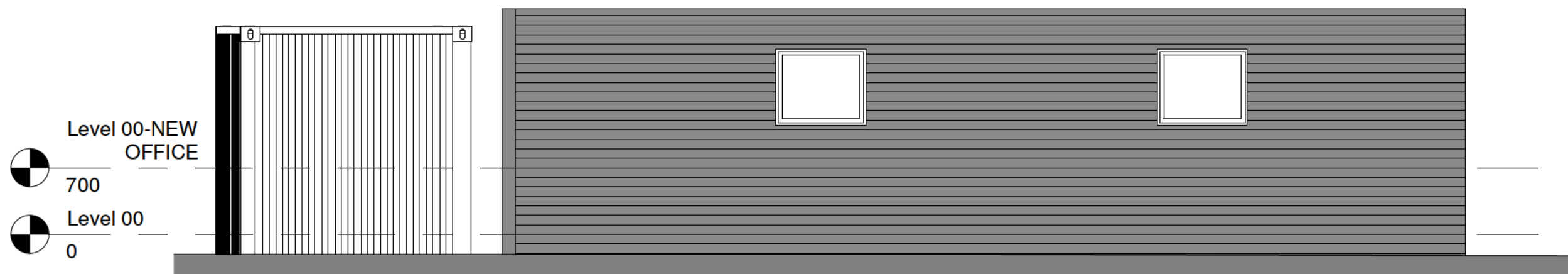
3 South Elevation - Existing
1 : 50



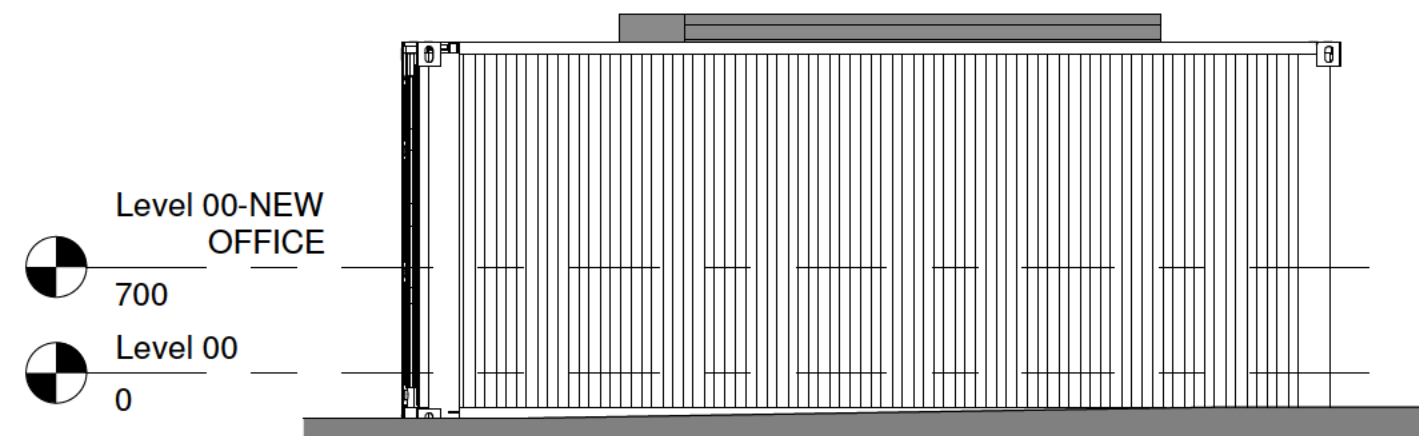
4 West Elevation - Existing
1 : 50



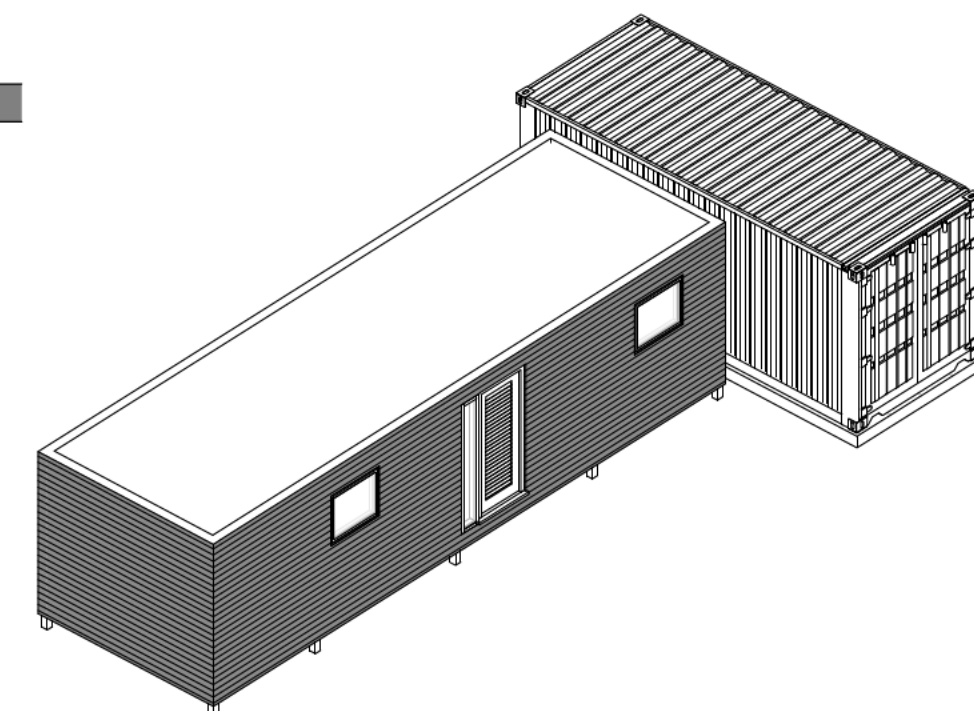
5 North Elevation - Existing
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6 East Elevation - Existing
1 : 50



7 3D - Existing



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rev	description	drawn	checked	date
revisions				

status: PRELIMINARY
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EMAIL INFO@LDVARCHITECTURE.CO.UK

client: Mr LAMB

project: AES OFFICE

title: EXISTING PLANS

scale: 1 : 50 @ A1

date: 17/04/26

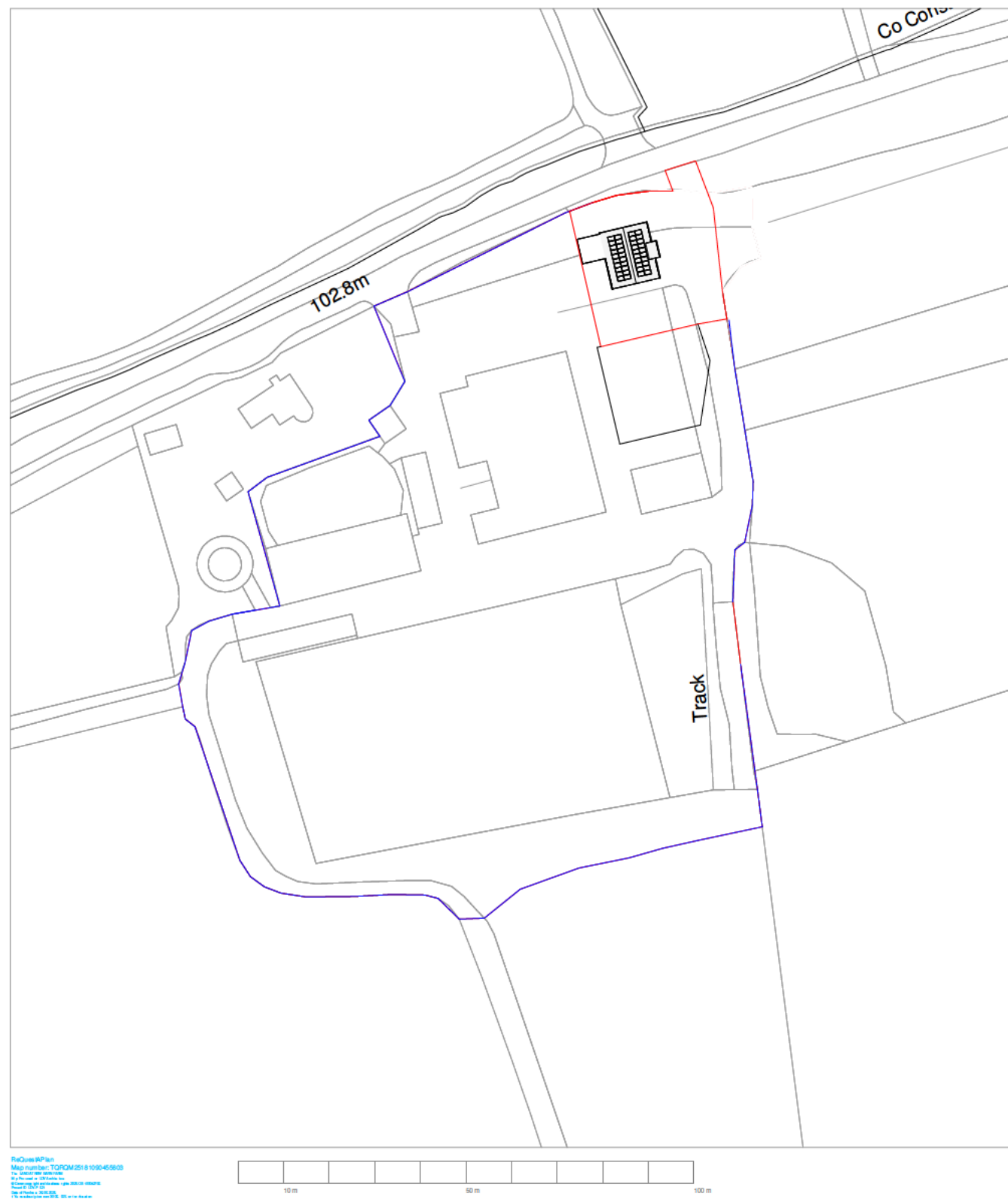
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checked: LDV

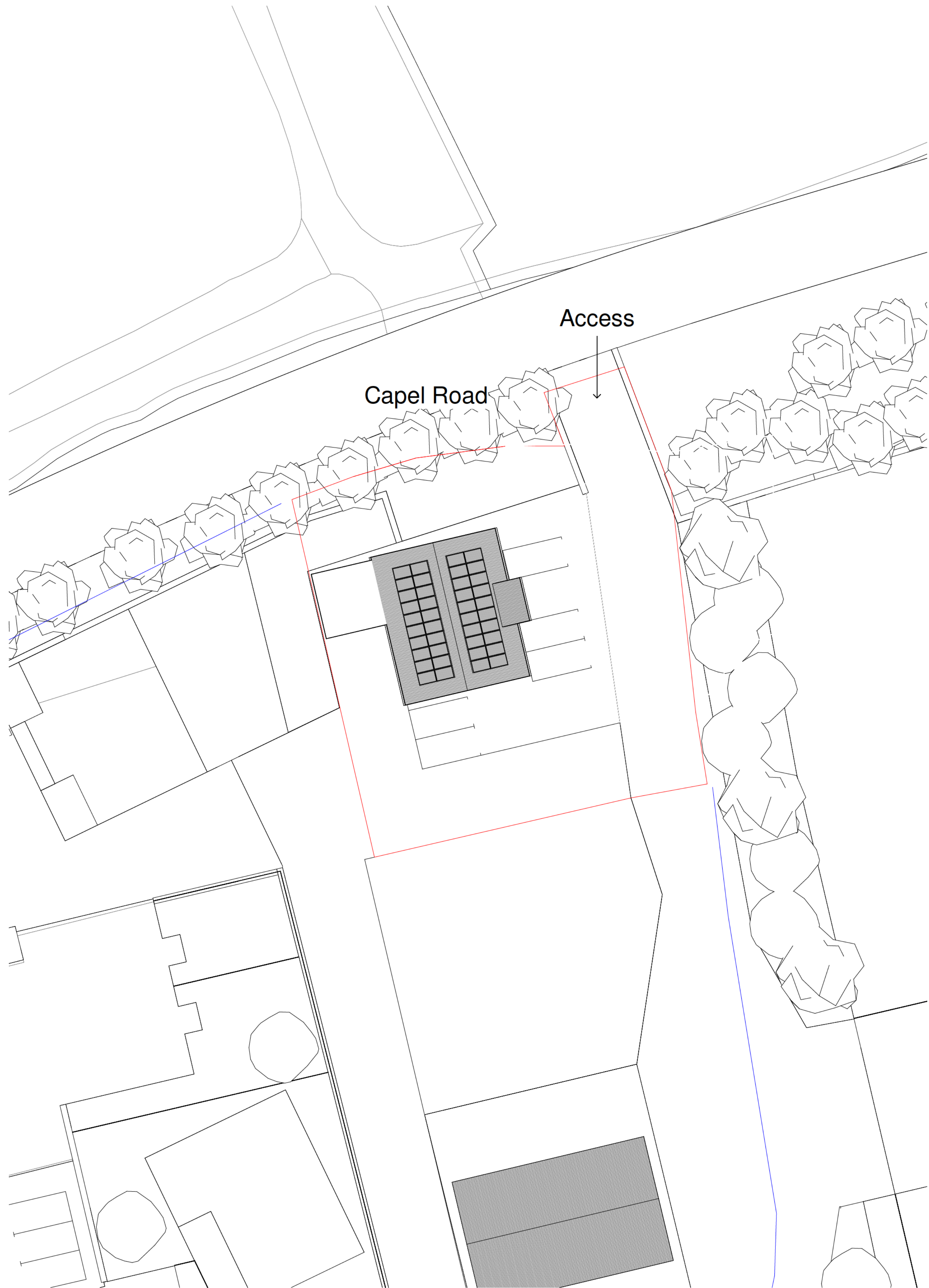
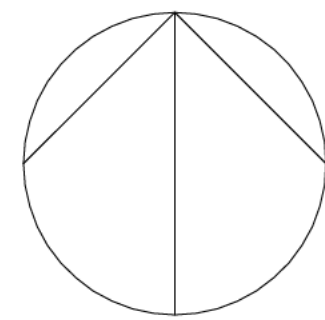
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drawing no: (02)-001

revision: A

APPENDIX B
Proposed Site Plans



1 Location Plan
1 : 1250



2 Site Plan
1 : 200

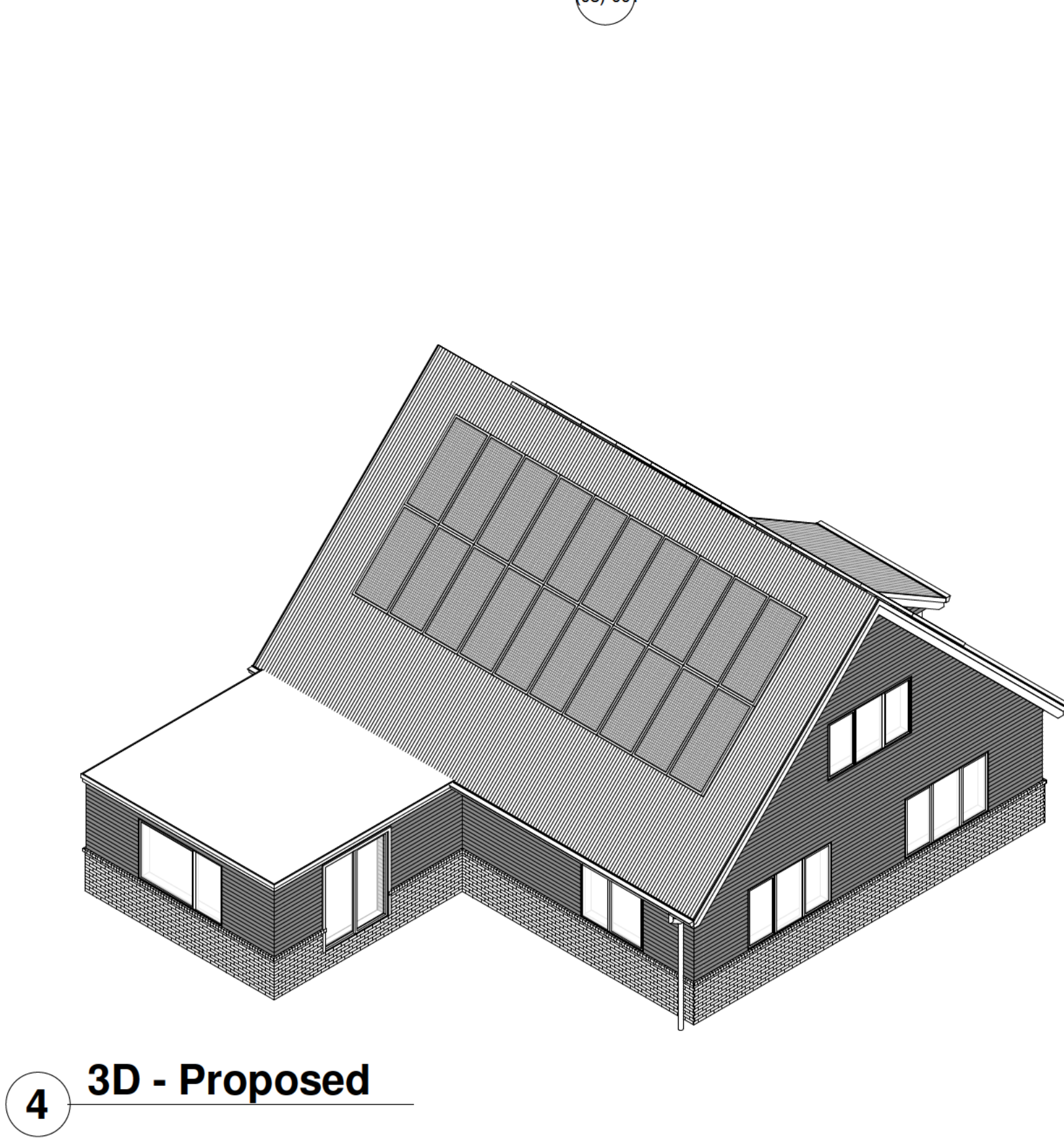
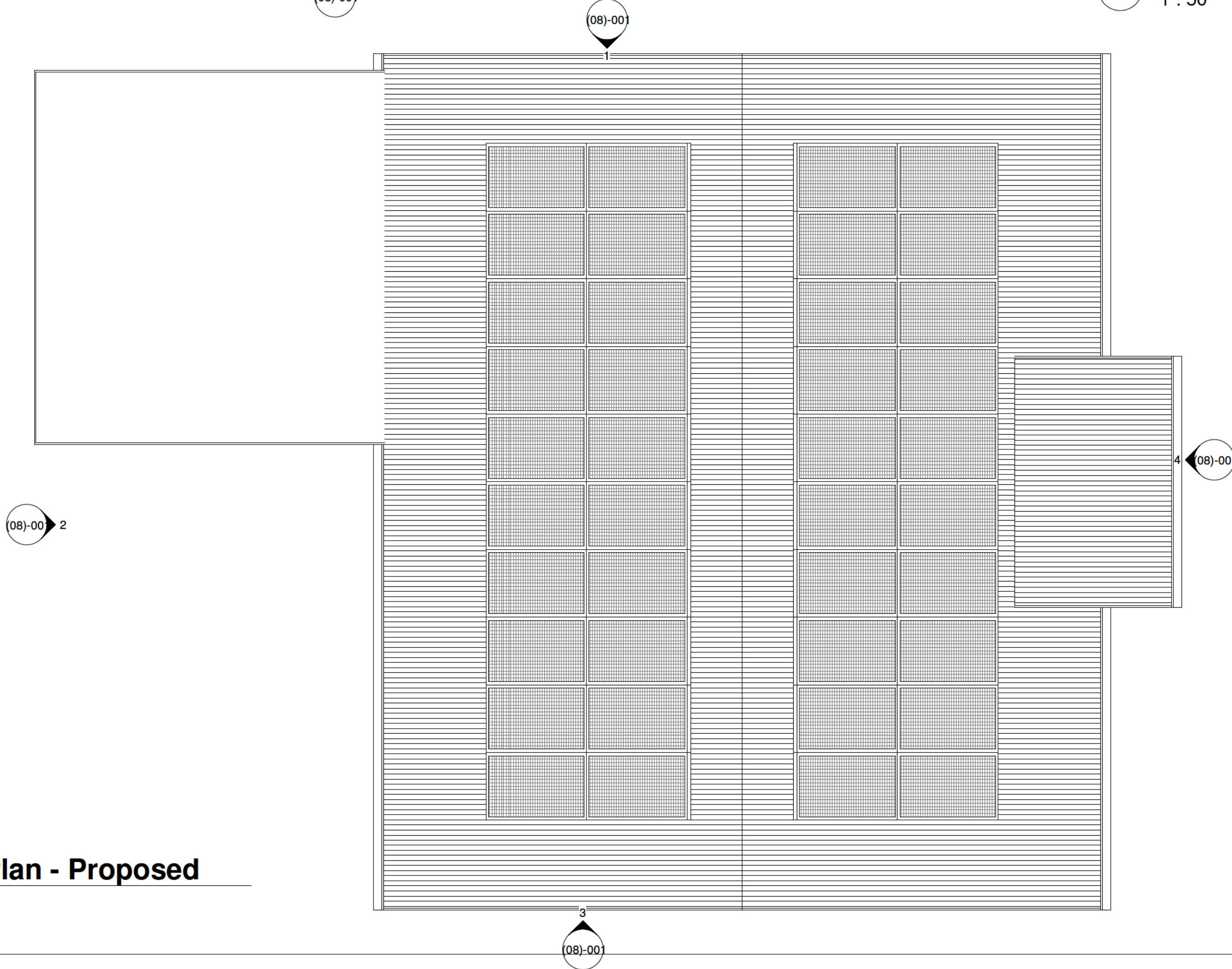
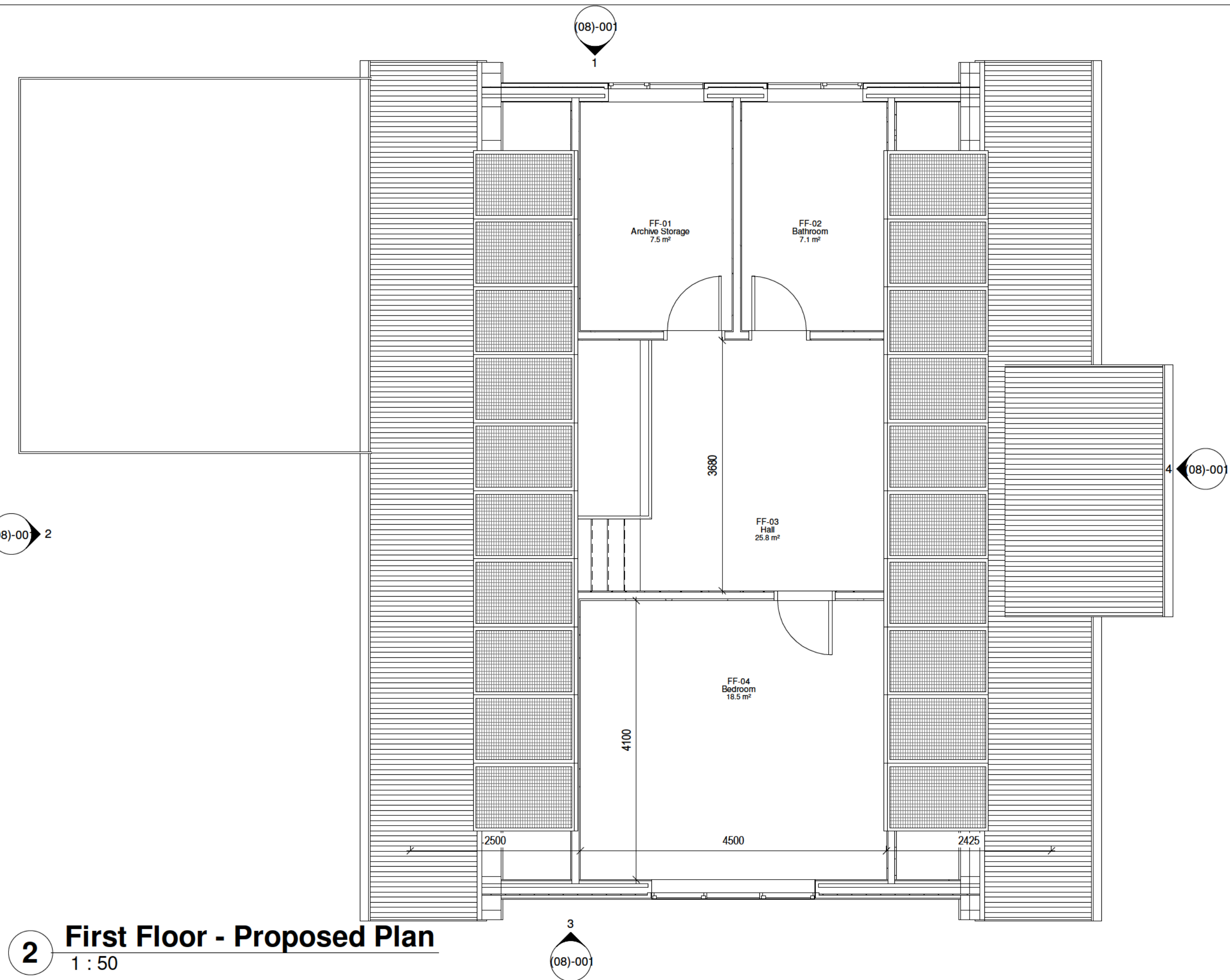
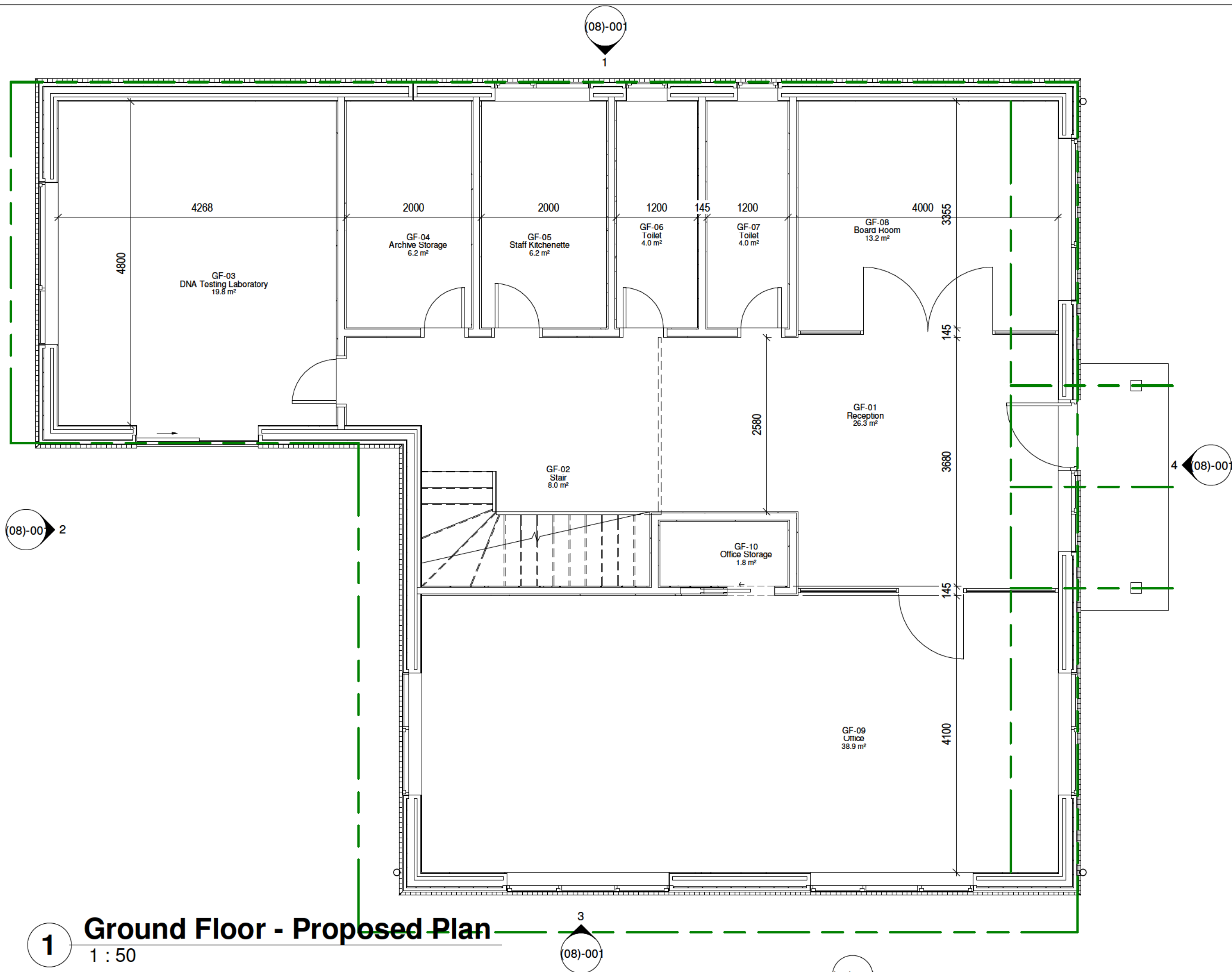
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rev	description	drawn	checked	date
revisions				

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client:	Mr LAMB		
project:	AES OFFICE		
title:	LOCATION AND SITE PLANS		
scale:	As indicated @ A1		
date:	30/04/26		
drawn:	LDV		
checked:	LDV		
job no:	drawing no:		revision:
P2521	(01)-001		B



B	Revision 2	LDV	LDV	24/04/26
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rev	description	drawn	checked	date
revisions				

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client: Mr LAMB

project: AES OFFICE

title: PROPOSED PLANS

scale: 1 : 50 @ A1

date: 17/04/26

drawn: LDV

checked: LDV

job no: P2521
drawing no: (07)-001
revision: B



APPENDIX C

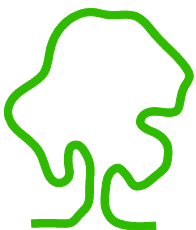
Photographs



Photograph 1: Proposed Office Location



Photograph 2: Vegetated bund along the northern boundary of the site with Capel Road.



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